Hayakawa Nojiko Suna wo Kizamu Hari

Chapter 4

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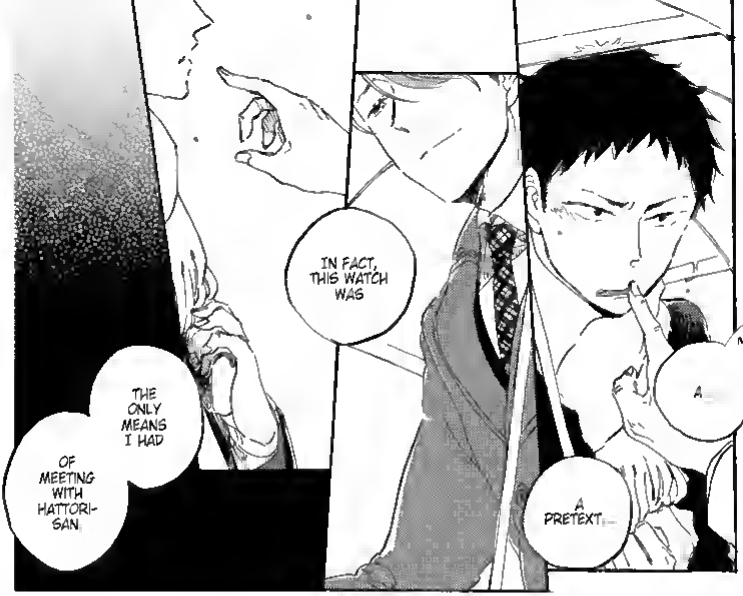
HAS IT FINALLY DAWNED ON YOU
THAT MY INTENTION...
砂を刻む針
ハヤカワノジコ

砂を刻む針

4話

ハヤカワノジコ
Nojico Hayakawa

人物紹介
智久
高川
あらすじ
アナログ時計を見ると解体衝動に襲われる高校生の遠久は、祖父の店で修理に出された懐中時計を見つける。何度も店に持ち込まれる時計と、その持ち主である艶原子の遠人に興味を持つ遠久だが、現れた人物はなんと男だった。時計を預ける代わりに祖父のことを教えてほしい、そう持ちかけた高川の真意を確かめようとする遠久に、高川は突然キスを仕掛けて…？
WHAT DO YOU
MEA-HM!
Hm
I'M NOT DONE YET
Hmmm
AND TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH HIM, AS A CUSTOMER.
I'VE POCKET WATCH
ALLOWED ME TO MAKE HATTORI-SAN'S ACQUAINTANCE.
...IN OTHER WORDS,
I'VE BEEN USING IT AS A PRETEXT TO KEEP SEEING HIM


IN FACT, THIS WATCH WAS
THE ONLY MEANS I HAD OF MEETING WITH HATTORI-SAN.
A PRETEXT...
Mm
A...

Hmm
THAT IS,
Mmm.
UNTIL I MET YOU
TOMOHISA-KUN

AND NOW, I THINK YOU'RE READY TO TAKE OVER THE ROLE
YOU'RE FREE TO DO AS YOU PLEASE WITH MY WATCH
AND IN EXCHANGE, I'LL BE USING YOU FOR MY OWN ENDS
SEE?
IT WAS ALWAYS A FAIR DEAL, TO BEGIN WITH.

SPLASH
EH?
KAGAWA-SAN
TOMOHISA-KUN
Y-
YES?!
YOU WERE KIND ENOUGH
NOT TO BRAND ME AS A SHADY GUY WHEN WE FIRST MET...
OH SOMEONE'S COMING OUR WAY...
BUT REALLY, WHO WOULDN'T WANT
TO MAKE A GOOD IMPRESSION ON THE PERSON THEY LIKE?

I'M SURE YOU'VE REALIZED BY NOW
HOW TWISTED A MAN I REALLY AM.
THEY WOULD, BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY
...THE RAIN'S GETTING HEAVIER
WELL THEN,
I'LL SEE YOU NEXT WEEK

SPLASH
SPLASH
An intention,
SPLASH
a pretext,
SPLASH
a means
to an end
Is it really so difficult for Kagawa-san to meet with Grandpa?!
I don't get it...
Even though he just likes him?
HOLY
WHOOSH
CRAP...

Clap
drip
Ah, shoot!
My lips are getting wet
The wind's picking up, too...
Had the forecasts announced a storm for today?
Now it's gonna come off—
drip
Wait,
what's there to "come off", anyway?!
Where the heck was I headed with that thought?!
I really need to get back home, pronto.
It only to calm my nerves.

TICK
TICK
TICK
TICK
TICK
TICK
It's not working
Now that I've snapped out of it,
the reality of what happened today,
the fact that Kagawa-san
kiss—
roll
roll
This isn't just a dream, is it?
JOLT
pinch
OW!
Hang on,
should I really be happy that it isn't?!
HM ?!

But, looking back,
Kagawa-san didn't seem
his usual self today
FNUP
CALM DOWN!
CALM THE HECK DOWN, OGI!
FNUP
FNUP
FNUP
FNUP
Keep it down would you?!
I had no idea that
a man's lips could be so soft
Leaving that aside...
I mean, not that I have anything to compare them to...

I wound up carrying it back with me, but
was that the right thing to do?
Sparkle
Oh, and,
I took it upon myself to pull it out of its pouch
but only to make sure it hadn't gotten wet!
By no means did I act out of an impure motive.
Spin
Spin
Spin
Okay, that's a lie...
I've given in to temptation. Just a teeny-weeny bit
I'm sorry!
But, man,
Even Grandpa complimented it, by pointing out
how much Kagawa-san must treasure that watch
(hasn't opened it up yet...)
how wonderfully well-maintained it is
you can tell just by looking at the case
Which makes me wonder...

Nah,
that'd be a little too far-fetched,
BUZZ
BUZZ
wouldn't it ?
By which I mean definitely
BUZZ
I think?
What if
this piece was seeking to make
a good impression, too?
I can't get my head around it
But then again, I'm just an idiot...
fwump
God-damnit...
CREAK

I can't hear the click of the gears anymore
Guess it'll stay this way as long as it's in my care, huh?
And I'm taking over its role now.
broke
But wait doesn't this mean I have a duty to perform to the best of my ability?!
Seeing as how Kagawa-san can't meet Grandpa without it?!
spring
After all, he did mention that this watch was his only means of...

to an end
A pretext
A means
An intention
A deal
Coupled with that pained
expression
on his face
Even though he likes him?

Is love
really such a difficult thing?
swish
rustle

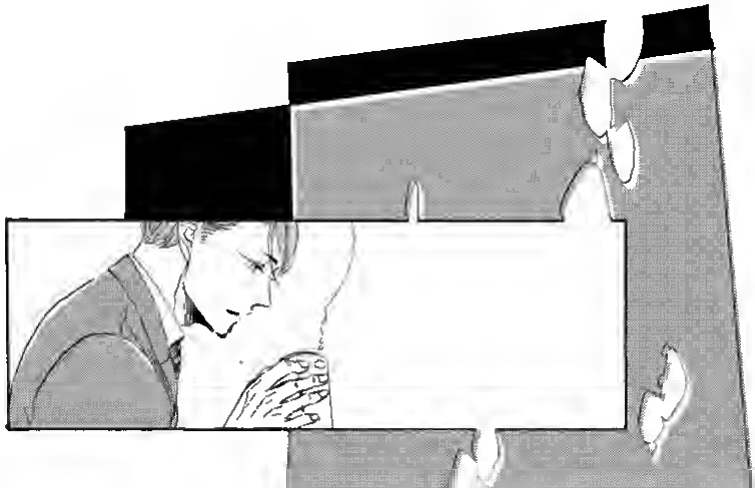
...IS THERE SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND?
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
YOU'RE NOT USUALLY THIS EAGER TO GET STARTED
Heh.
DON'T BE SO COLD
IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE WE WERE LAST TOGETHER LIKE THIS
DO ME A FAVOR AND INDULGE ME JUST THIS ONCE HM?
I LOVE YOU
hoa

Ha
HEY, OGI
IS YOUR HEAD SCREWED ON PROPERLY?
TOO BLUNT!
L-lets be a little more tactful, alright?
SO—
OGI LOOKS LIKE HE'S MORE DEPRESSED THAN EVER.
And he was so happy just the other day...
This feels more serious than just a reader mood swing, doesn't it
—YEAH
I'M GETTING A LITTLE WORRIED, TOO
dazed
YOU WORRIED ABOUT SOMETHING?
SOMETHING TO DO WITH CLOCKS, CLOCKS OR CLOCKS?
THAT'S A LOT OF THE SAME THING
WORRIED—
I WOULDN'T SAY THAT, BUT—
THERE'S THIS THING I CAN'T GET MY HEAD AROUND
CLATTER
OH, WHAT'S EATING YOU?
Keep this conversation away from clocks and we're all ears
))

CRACK
IS BEING IN LOVE ALWAYS SUCH A PAINFUL, STRESSFUL AND DIFFICULT THING?
Oh-
OH, CUT IT OUT! THIS ISN'T ABOUT ME...
OKAY THEN, WE'LL HEAR YOU OUT
YOU'VE GOT IT BAD, AND YOU'VE BEEN IN A STRANGE MOOD LATELY BECAUSE OF THAT?
SO YOU'RE TELLING ME
WAIT, THAT'S WHAT'S TROUBLING YOU?
HUH?
CLATTER
CLATTER
whisper
scrub
So, then,
why does he feel the need to make a deal?
It's only natural that you'd want to support them
you wouldn't even think twice about doing it, right?
or to stay by their side when they were hurting,
If a friend needed you to lend them a hand,
RIGHT.
THAT'S USUALLY HOW IT GOES,
YEAH.
HOW WHAT GOES?
I'm not following

OGI.
MIND SHARING WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?
CAUSE WE'RE COMPLETELY IN THE DARK HERE
RIGHT...
SORRY,
I'M... NOT SURE HOW TO PUT IT
WELL, THEN...
URGH
WE'LL JUST WAIT UNTIL YOU'RE READY TO TALK ABOUT IT
CAN'T SAY I'VE EVER SEEN YOU RUMINATE SO MUCH OVER SOMETHING UNRELATED TO CLOCKS BEFORE
JUST BE CAREFUL YOU DON'T OVERDO IT!
WE'RE ALWAYS HERE TO LEND AN EAR IF YOU NEED IT
ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
YEAH JUST DON'T EXPECT ANY MORE THAN THAT.
It weirds me out when you're moping, so please revert back to your old clock-nerd self already.
And don't touch me.
SLAP
Thanks, guys!
AS TO THE ISSUE AT HAND...

YOU KNOW THAT THING YOU SAID EARLIER
ABOUT LOVE BEING PAINFUL AND ALL?
SOUNDS LIKE UNREQUITED FEELINGS TO ME. IS THAT IT?



CLATTER
HI!
YOU'RE EARLY TODAY, KAGAWA-SAN.
I WAS HOPING I'D ARRIVE A BIT EARLIER MYSELF, BUT...
IT'S ALRIGHT.

CREAK
HUH?
WHY ARE YOU THANKING ME?
THANK YOU FOR COMING...
WELL,
I'D ASSUMED YOU WOULDN'T SHOW UP TODAY.
...HUH?
I APOLOGIZE FOR THE OTHER DAY
Wait,
What's the matter?
DON'T-
LIM, KAGAWA-SAN,
PLEASE LIFT YOUR HEAD UP
IT WAS CHILDISH OF ME TO BEHAVE IN THAT WAY,
AND I REGRET IT

I SHOULD NEVER HAVE INVOLVED YOU IN MY AFFAIRS
...LET ALONE BURDEN YOU WITH
THE KNOWLEDGE OF MY FEELINGS.
...WHAT'S THE
HARM?
DOESN'T IT BOTHER YOU?
WHAT'S THE HARM IN IT?
BOTHER ME?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

I'M A MAN
THE FACT THAT
WHO LIKES OTHER MEN MUST BE REPULSIVE TO YOU I'M SURE
WHY WOULD IT?
GRANTED, I'M A LITTLE OUT OF MY DEPTH HERE, BUT...
WHAT?
IF YOU ASK ME, I'D MUCH RATHER HAVE SOMEONE'S AFFECTION THAN THEIR HATRED.
Poke
BRAGGING ABOUT IT IF I KNEW YOU LIKED ME
IN FACT, I COULDN'T GUARANTEE YOU I WOULDN'T GO

twist
twist
twist
AREN'T YOU FORGETTING WHAT I SAID?
WHAT ABOUT YOU, KAGAWA-SAN?
ABOUT WHAT?
...
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.
I'M JUST HAPPY TO KNOW THAT YOU LIKE GRANDPA.
WHATEVER THE NATURE OF YOUR FEELINGS FOR HIM...
AND I'M SURE GRANDPA WOULD BE HAPPY TO HEAR— OKAY. MAYBE NOT
BUT I CAN AT LEAST ASSURE YOU HE WOULDN'T FIND IT
REPULSIVE
BESIDES, I'VE ALREADY...
Sounds like unrequited feelings to me.
MADE MY DECISION

ta
p
I'LL TAKE OVER THAT WATCH'S ROLE
AND HELP YOU IN ANY WAY I CAN.
YOU'LL HELP ME?
THAT'S THE LEAST I CAN DO, IF WE'RE GONNA HAVE
A FAIR DEAL
SORRY ABOUT THAT
IT'LL REMAIN LIKE THAT AS LONG AS I'M HOLDING ONTO IT
YOUR WATCH HAS ALREADY STOPPED WORKING, AND
mechanical
... AND, UM,
SPEAKING OF WHICH, I OWE YOU AN APOLOGY
whisper
OH, NO,
THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOU TO APOLOGIZE...
YOU CAN
DO WHATEVER YOU WANT WITH IT. I DON'T MIND.

IN THAT CASE,
YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU WANT WITH ME, AND I WON'T MIND
WHAT?
hah,
JUST KIDDING
That totally came across the wrong way, didn't it?

BUT YOU KNOW
I'M COMPLETELY SERIOUS
I'LL BE HERE WHENEVER YOU HAVE A USE FOR ME
I CAN BE PRETTY HANDY, YOU KNOW.

...YOU CAN'T JUST
SAY THINGS
LIKE THAT SO EASILY
Oh,
he's finally laughing

YOUR FRIES MUST BE COLD BY NOW
CHEESE BURGER

I shouldn't have brought up this topic
OH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT!
I LIKE COLD FRIES JUST AS MUCH
REALLY?
munch
I SUPPOSE THAT'S GOOD, THEN...
Ack!
COUGH
COUGH
EH?
ARE YOU ALRIGHT?!
ugh-
Drink some soda
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT FORCING YOURSELF TO EAT—
NO, THAT'S NOT IT
...UM,
C-CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?

Why did you—
that day, didn't you?
You, um, k- ki- kissed me...
SORRY, WHAT THING?
ER, WHY DID YOU, UH, DO IT?
THAT THING YOU DID BACK THEN
AH, YOU MEAN,
WHEN I WAS SILENCING YOU?
I ALSO NEED TO TAKE A STEP BACK AND COLLECT MYSELF
IF I WANTED TO APOLOGIZE, I GUESS I SHOULD HAVE STARTED THERE
YOU'RE RIGHT
BUT
GRK
GRK
HEH
IT WAS SOMETHING I DID ON THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT
I JUST FIGURED IT WOULD BE THE QUICKEST WAY TO KEEP YOU QUIET
CRUMBLE

I'M SORRY FOR ANY DISCOMFORT
I CAUSED YOU
Oh, no!
Please, no need to apologize!
DART
Now you're just rubbing salt in my wound.
It didn't bother me at all!
Not even a little bit!
IS THAT SO?
YEP, I'M TOTALLY FINE NOW.
IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN YOUR FIRST TIME WOULD IT?
OF COURSE NOT!
HAHAHAHA
i was such a fool for letting myself
celebrate the whole thing
Then again,
was I even supposed to be celebrating?
I just don't know.
Gosh, I'm a mess
Okay, now's really not the time for this, Ogi!
S-so, Kagawa-san,
what are your plans from here on?
MY PLANS?
For seeing Grandpa, of course!
lean
YOU CAN'T DROP BY THE SHOP NOW THAT I'M HOLDING ONTO YOUR WATCH, REMEMBER?
I ACTUALLY
SLURP
rehydrating
CAME HERE TODAY TO HAVE
A STRATEGY MEETING WITH YOU

SLAM
YOU CAN'T THINK LIKE THAT!
WHAT WOULD BE THE POINT IN DOING THIS, OTHERWISE?
NO,
AS I SAID BEFORE, HEARING YOU TALK ABOUT HIM IS
ALL I NEED.
BUT I CAN HARDLY
VISIT HIM WITHOUT A REASON, CAN I?
CREAK
TELL ME,
Why would that need
a reason?
WHAT REASON DO YOU NEED
TO GO SEE SOMEONE THAT YOU LIKE?

There's no use getting caught up in principles.
Yeah
LEAVE EVERYTHING TO ME!
WAIT...
TOMOHISA-KUN,
WE SHOULD HANG OUT AT GRANDPA'S PLACE AND EAT SOME!
YOU TOLD ME BEFORE THAT YOU WANTED TO TRY OUT THOSE TAIYAKI RIGHT?
I KNOW!
I'll take care of the shopping. What fillings would you like?
sorrelle
I have a duty
to bring those two together... in place of that watch

HM?
定休日
服部時計店
HEY TOMOHISA

I SHOULDN'T BE INTRUDING ON YOUR FAMILY GATHERING
AH, PARDON ME...
IT'S FINE!
I INVITED HIM HERE.
Whaaat?
Here's some tea
Thank you
tap
YOU KNOW THAT TODAY'S MY DAY OFF!
tap
YEP.
tap
tap
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, THEN?
Who?
I TOLD YOU, HE'S NOT HERE ON BUSINESS
I BROUGHT HIM HERE, AND HIS NAME IS KAGAWA-SAN
Sob...
THAT SAID, IT'S MY POLICY NOT TO DO FAVORS FOR ANY OF MY CUSTOMERS REGULARS OR NOT
I NEVER IMAGINED YOU TWO WOULD GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO HANG OUT TOGETHER.
HAHA
AND I'M VERY GRATEFUL TO TOMOHISA FOR THAT
Whisper
YOU'RE DOING GREAT!
LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE WON HIM OVER WITH THAT TEA
HE RARELY EVER ASKS FOR A SECOND REFILL
AND I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW, THAT TEA YOU'VE BEEN DRINKING IS A GIFT FROM HIM
(his third pill)

I've never seen
Grandpa isn't mincing his words but they seem to be interacting just fine
things are actually going pretty well?
I'll admit that I was a little antsy at first, but
A cup of tea later
an expression like that on his face
...
well,
all's well that ends well
To Be Continued

NOJICO★HAYAKAWA

ハヤカワノジコ

It's that time of year when soumen tastes wonderful. For snacks, I love eating onigiri